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Fifty Songs of Love



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HUNDRED AND NINETY
SEVEN BY JAMES MASON

Leigh Hunt

BETTER to have the love of one
Than smiles like morning dew ;
Better to have a living seed
Than flowers of every hue.

Better to feel a love within
Than be lovely to the sight ;
Better a homely tenderness
Than beauty's wild delight.

Better to love than be beloved,
Though lonely all the day ;
Better the fountain in the heart
Than the fountain by the way.

Better the thanks of one dear heart
Than a nation's voice of praise ;
Better the twilight ere the dawn
Than yesterday's mid-blaze.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

HOW do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and
height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being, and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely as men strive for Right ;
I love thee purely as they turn from Praise ;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs and with my childhood's
faith ;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost Saints,—I love thee with the
breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! and, if God
choose
I shall but love thee better after death.

William Shakespeare

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove ;
Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown although his height
be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and
cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and
weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

NOT as all other women may,
Love I my love ; he is so great,
So beautiful, I dare essay
No nearness, but in silence lay
My heart upon his path and wait.

Poor heart, its beatings are so low
He does not heed them passing by,
Save as one heeds, where violets grow,
A fragrance, caring not to know
Where the veiled purple buds may lie.

I sometimes think that it is dead—
It lies so still. I bend and lean,
Like mother over cradle head,
Wondering if still faint breaths are shed,
Like sighs the parted lips between.

And then with vivid pulse and thrill,
It quickens into sudden bliss,
At sound of step or voice, nor will
Be hushed, although, regardless still,
He knows not, cares not, it is his.

I would not lift it if I could :
The little flame, tho' faint and dim
As glow-worm spark in lonely wood,
Shining where no man calls it good,
May one day light the path for him,

Susan Coolidge

May guide his way, or soon or late,
Through blinding mist or wintry rain,
And so content I watch and wait —
Let others share his happier fate,
I only ask to share his pain.

And if some day, when passing by,
My dear love should his steps arrest,
Should mark the poor heart waiting nigh,
Should know it his, should lift it, why —
Patience is good, but joy is best.

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
 Clasped by the golden light of morn,
 Like the sweetheart of the sun,
 Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an Autumn flush
 Deeply ripened ; — such a blush
 In the midst of brown was born,
 Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
 Which were blackest none could tell,
 But long lashes veiled a light
 That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
 Made her tressy forehead dim ;
 Thus she stood amid the stooks,
 Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean,
 Where I reap thou shouldst but glean :
 Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
 Share my harvest and my home.

M. Lindsay

THY voice is near me in my dreams;
In accents sweet and low,
Telling of happiness and love
In days long, long ago.

Word after word I think I hear,
Yet strange it seems to me
That, though I listen to thy voice,
Thy face I never see.

From night to night my weary heart
Lives on the treasured past,
And ev'ry day I fondly say,
He'll come to me at last.

Yet still I weep, and watch, and pray,
As time rolls slowly on ;
And yet I have no hope but thee,
Thou first, thou dearest one.

CHEY were young and glad together
In the dawn of life's first May,
When in bright and sunny weather
Sang the birds from every spray.
Clear the heaven shone out above them ;
Blue and radiant were the skies ;
All things living seemed to love them ;
And the spring gleamed in her eyes.

Through life's summer still together,
Hand in hand and heart to heart,
They have borne the sultry weather
And have watched the days depart.
Still she is to him the maiden
Who stepped daintily of old
Through the grass, her apron laden
With bright buttercups of gold.

Still together, still together,
They will face life's autumn hours ;
In the grim November weather
Love will strew their path with flowers.
For their love has ever brightened
Since the first long loving day,
And their happiness has heightened,
Though their hair is growing gray !

Mary Clemmer

GOOD-BY, Sweetheart.

I leave thee with all purest things,
That when some fair temptation sings
Its luring song, though sore beset,
Thou 'lt stronger be ; then no regret
Life-long will follow after thee.
With touches lighter than the air
I kiss thy forehead brave and fair,
And say to God this last deep prayer,
“ Oh, guard him always night and day,
So from Thy peace he shall not stray.”
And so Good-by, Sweetheart.

Good-by, Sweetheart. We seem to part ;
Yet still within my inmost heart
Thou goest with me. Still my place
I hold in thine by love's dear grace ;
Yet all my life seems going out,
As slow I turn my face about
To go alone another way,—
To be alone till life's last day,
Unless thy smile can light my way.
Good-by, Sweetheart. The dreaded dawn,
That tells our love's long tryst is gone,
Is purpling all the pallid sky,
As loud I sigh, Sweetheart, good-by !

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest ;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest.
For those that wander they know not where,
Are full of trouble, and full of care ;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt ;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest ;
The bird is safest in its nest ;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky ;
To stay at home is best.

Lewis Morris

WHAT shall I do for my love,
Who is so tender
And dear and true,
Loving and true and tender,
My strength and my defender —
What shall I do?

I will cleave unto my love,
Who am too lowly
For him to take.
With a self-surrender holy
I will cleave unto him solely,
I will give my being wholly
For his dear sake.

A GOOD wife rose from her bed one morn,
And thought, with a nervous dread,
Of the piles of clothes to be washed, and more
Than a dozen mouths to be fed.
There's the meals to get for the men in the
field ;
And the children to fix away
To school ; and the milk to be skimmed and
churned :
And all to be done this day.

It had rained in the night, and all the wood
Was wet as it could be ;
There were puddings and pies to bake, besides
A loaf of cake for tea.
And the day was hot, and her aching brow
Throbbled wearily as she said :
"If maidens but knew what good wives know,
They would be in no haste to wed !"

* * * *

"Jennie, what do you think I told Ben
Brown ?"

Called the farmer from the well ;
And a flush crept up to his bronzed brow,
And his eyes half-bashfully fell.
"It was this," he said, and, coming near,
He smiled, and, stooping down,
Kissed her cheek — "'Twas this : That you
were the best
And the dearest wife in town !"

Thomas Burnett

The farmer went back to the field, and the
wife,

In a smiling and absent way,
Sang snatches of tender little songs

She'd not sung for many a day.
And the pain in her head was gone, and
the clothes

Were white as the foam of the sea ;
Her bread was light, and her butter was
sweet,

And as golden as it could be.

"Just think," the children all called in a
breath—

"Tom Wood has run off to sea !

"He wouldn't, we know, if he only had had
As happy a home as we."

The night came down, and the good wife
smiled

To herself, as she softly said :

"'Tis so sweet to labor for those we love,
It's no wonder that maids will wed !"

George Gordon, Lord Byron

YES, Love indeed is light from Heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the soul above,
But Heaven itself descends in Love.
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought !
A ray of Him who formed the whole ;
A glory circling round the soul !

Phœbe Cary

THINK true love is never blind,
But rather brings an added light ;
An inner vision quick to find
The beauties hid from common sight.

No soul can ever clearly see
Another's highest, noblest part ;
Save through the sweet philosophy
And loving wisdom of the heart.

AND *this* is Love ! until this hour
I never lived ; but like a flower
Close prest i' the bud, with sleeping senses,
I drank the dark dim influences
Of sunlight, moonlight, shade, and dew.
At last I open, thrilling thro'
With Love's strange scent, which seemeth
part
Of the warm life within my heart,
Part of the air I breathe — O bliss !
Was ever night so sweet as this ?
It is enough to breathe, to be,
As if one were a flower, a tree ;
A leaf o' the bough, just stirring light
With the warm breathing of the night !

Christina Georgina Rossetti

IF now you saw me you would say :
Where is the face I used to love ?
And I would answer : Gone before ;
It tarries veiled in Paradise.
When once the Morning Star shall rise,
When earth with shadow flees away,
And we stand safe within the door,
Then you shall lift the veil thereof.
Look up, rise up ; for far above
Our palms are grown, our place is set ;
There we shall meet as once we met,
And love with old familiar love.

THOU ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget that hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity can not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thine image at our last embrace —
Ah, little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning
green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray —
Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.

Robert Burns

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care ;
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary ! dear departed shade !
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

SHE keeps the gift of years before —
A withered violet is her bliss ;
She knows not what his greatness is ;
For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
Of early faith and plighted vows ;
She knows but matters of the house ;
And he — he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move ;
She darkly feels him great and wise ;
She dwells on him with faithful eyes ;
“ I cannot understand — I love.”

Helen Hunt Jackson

“**D**ARLING,” he said, “I never meant
To hurt you ;” and his eyes were wet.
“I would not hurt you for the world ;
Am I to blame if I forget ?”

“Forgive my selfish tears !” she cried,
“Forgive ! I knew that it was not
Because you meant to hurt me, sweet, —
I knew it was that you forgot !”

But all the same, deep in her heart
Rankled this thought, and rankles yet, —
“When love is at its best, one loves
So much that he can not forget.”

TELL me, my wishing soul, didst't thou e'er try
How fast the wings of red-crossed Love can fly?
Why beg'st thou, then, the pinions of a dove?
Faith's wings are swifter; but the swiftest,
Love !

John Greenleaf Whittier

“**I**’M sorry that I spelt the word,
I hate to go above you,
Because”—the brown eyes lower fell—
“Because, you see, I love you!”

SHE dwelt among th' untrodden ways,
Beside the Springs of Dove ;
A maid whom there were few to praise,
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye !
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and O
The difference to me !

John Greenleaf Whittier

STILL on the lips of all we question
The finger of God's silence lies ;
Will the lost hands in ours be folded ?
Will the shut eyelids ever rise ?

O friend, no proof beyond this yearning,
This outreach of our hearts we need ;
God will not mock the hope He giveth ;
No love He prompts shall vainly plead.

Then let us stretch our hands in darkness,
And call our loved ones o'er and o'er ;
Some day their arms shall close about us,
And the old voices speak once more.

AND said I that my limbs were old?
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled
And my poor withered heart was dead,
And that I might not sing of Love?
How could I to the dearest theme
That ever warmed a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name Love's very name,
Nor wake my harp to notes of flame!

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love.

Robert Southey

THEY sin who tell us Love can die :
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of Hell :
Earthly these passions ; as of Earth,
They perish where they have their birth.
But Love is indestructible ;
Its holy flame forever burneth ;
From Heaven it came—to Heaven returneth.
Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
And hath in Heaven its perfect rest.
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of Love is *there*.

OH, lay thy hand in mine, dear!
We're growing old;
But time hath brought no sign, dear,
That hearts grow cold.
'Tis long, long since our new love
Made life divine,
But age enricheth true love
Like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
And take thy rest;
Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
And make thy nest.
A-many cares are pressing
On this dear head,
But sorrow's hands in blessing
Are surely laid.

Oh, lean thy life on mine, dear,
'Twill shelter thee!
Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
On my young tree.
And so, till boughs are leafless
And birds are flown,
We'll twine, then lay us, griefless,
Together down.

Margaret Elizabeth Sangster

T isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
That gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you did not send, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts at night.

The stone you might have lifted
Out of a brother's way ;
The bit of heartsome counsel
You were hurried too much to say ;
The loving touch of the hand, dear,
The gentle, winning tone,
Which you had no time nor thought for,
With troubles enough of your own.

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion,
That tarries until too late ;
And it isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.

WHOM we first love, you know, we seldom
wed.
Time rules us all. And life, indeed, is
not
The thing we planned it out ere hope was
dead ;
And then, we women cannot choose our
lot.

Much must be borne which it is hard to
bear ;
Much given away which it were sweet
to keep.
God help us all ! who need, indeed, His
care.
And yet, I know, the Shepherd loves
His sheep.

My little boy begins to babble now
Upon my knee his earliest infant prayer.
He has his father's eager eyes, I know,
And they say, too, his mother's sunny
hair.

But when he sleeps and smiles upon my
knee,
And I can feel his light breath come and
go,
I think of one (Heaven help and pity me!)
Who loved me, and whom I loved, long
ago.

Owen Meredith

Who might have been — Ah, what I dare
not think !

We all are changed ; God judges for
us best.

God help us do our duty and not shrink,
And trust in Heaven humbly for the
rest.

But blame us women not if some appear
Too cold at times, and some too gay and
light.

Some griefs gnaw deep, some woes are
hard to bear —

Who knows the past, and who can
judge us right ?

Ah, we are judged by what we might
have been,

And not by what we are, too apt to
fall !

My little child — he sleeps and smiles
between

Those thoughts and me. In Heaven we
shall know all.

WHEN the tide comes in
In hearts, at once the hearts begin
Together to be glad.
What the tide has brought
They do not care, they have not sought.
All joy they ever had
The new joy multiplies ;
All pain by which it may be bought
Seems paltry sacrifice.

Dora Greenwell

TWO birds within one nest ;
Two hearts within one breast ;
Two spirits in one fair,
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.
An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch,
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win ;
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

CHEY sin who tell us Love can die;
They err who tell us Love is blind :
Within each orb doth sleepless lie
A watcher from the soul behind.

When Love was left on this earth so cold,
So far from her native skies,
God gave her the lamp of love to hold,
And lighted her starlike eyes.

And she can see where the world sees not,
And she can go where none other may ;
If I were through dark Hades brought,
I'd still ask Love to lead the way.

Tender and true is the light of her eyes,
As she looks me through and through ;
In knowing, and loving silence, wise,
Yet fond as no fault she knew.

Like the keen-vision'd eagle, the tender-eyed
So sees the guardian angel, Love. [dove,
She spreads her mantle o'er ev'ry sin,
But Love will have all pure within.

Charles Mackay

WHAT is the meaning of the song
That rings so clear and loud,
Thou nightingale amid the copse,
Thou lark above the cloud?

What says thy song, thou joyous thrush,
Up in the walnut tree?

“I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me.”

What is the meaning of thy thought,
O Maiden fair and young?

There is such pleasure in thine eyes,
Such music on thy tongue ;

There is such glory on thy face—
What can the meaning be?

“I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me.”

O, happy words ! At Beauty's feet
We sing them ere our prime ;
And when the early summers pass
And care comes on with time,

Still be it ours, in care's despite,
To join the chorus free,

“I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me.”

GOD keep you safe, my love,
All through the night;
Rest close in His encircled arms
Until the light.
My heart is with you as I kneel to pray,
Good-night! God keep you in His care
[always.

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts
About my head;
I lose myself in tender dreams,
While overhead
The moon comes stealing through the win-
[dow bars,
A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
Feel safe and strong
To trust you thus, dear love — and yet —
The night is long.
I say with sobbing breath the fond, old prayer:
Good-night, sweet dreams, God keep you
[everywhere

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

LOVE much. Earth has enough of bitter in it ;
Cast sweets into its cup whene'er you can.
No heart so hard but love at last may win it.
Love is the grand primeval cause of man ;
All hate is foreign to the first great plan.

Love much. Men's souls contract with cold
suspicion ;
Shine on them with warm love, and they
expand.

'Tis love, not creeds, that from a low condition
Leads mankind up to heights supreme and
grand.

Oh, that the world would see and under-
stand !

Love much. There is no waste in freely
giving ;

More blessed it is, even, than to receive.

He who loves much, alone finds life worth
living ;

Love on through doubt and darkness, and
believe

There is no thing which love may not
achieve.

THE scent of a blossom from Eden !
The flower was not given to me,
But it freshened my spirit forever,
As it passed, on its way to thee !

In my soul is a lingering music :
The song was not meant for me,
But I listen and listen, and wonder
To whom it can lovelier be.

The sounds and the scents that float by us—
They cannot tell whither they go ;
Yet however it fails of its errand,
Love makes the world sweeter, I know.

I know that love never is wasted,
Nor truth, nor the breath of a prayer ;
And the thought that goes forth as a blessing
Must live, as a joy in the air.

George W. Crofts

"**T** LOVE you, dear!" and saying this,
My heart responds, "'Tis true! 'tis true!"
And thrills with more than earthly bliss
While still I say, "I love but you!"

"Why should I love you, dear?" you ask,
As tho' true love could reason why;
If love could think, 't would be a task
For me to love, and love would die.

I love you just because I do,
The key I do not care to find,
For fear the strands would break in two
That me a willing captive bind.

The fact is all I want to know,
I will not grieve while that is given;
To lose my love would be my woe;
To keep it as it is, is heaven.

WHEN Spring comes laughing
By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
And daffodil,—
Sing stars of morning,
Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell
And my Love's eyes!

When comes the Summer,
Full leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
The orchard long,—
Sing hid, sweet honey
That no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses
And my Love's lips.

When Autumn scatters
The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
The broad-wheeled wain,—
Sing flutes of harvest
When men rejoice;
Sing round of reapers
And my Love's voice.

Austin Dobson

But when comes Winter
 With hail and storm,
And red fire roaring
 And ingle warm,
Sing first sad going
 Of friends that part ;
Then sing glad meeting
 And my Love's heart.

Adelaide Anne Procter

Tis not because your heart is mine—mine only,
Mine alone,
It is not because you choose me weak and lonely
For your own ;
Not because the earth is fairer, and the skies,
Spread above you,
Are more radiant for the shining of your eyes—
That I love you !

Nay, not even because your hand holds heart
 At your will, [and life
 Soothing, hushing all its discord, making strife
 Calm and still ;
 Teaching Trust to fold her wings, nor ever roam
 From her nest ;
 Teaching Love that her securest, safest home
 Must be rest.

But because this human Love, though true
Yours and mine— [and sweet—
Has been sent by Love more tender, more
More divine, [complete,
That it leads our hearts to rest at last in Heaven,
Far above you ;
Do I take you as a gift that God has given—
And I love you !

AH well, shall I wonder you left me !
 That world is "a rest :"
 For so it is written : but this one
 A battle at best,
 Where the victors have scant time for
 The green laurel crown, [wearing
 And the vanquished go down like the dry
 When woodlands are brown. [leaves,
 You were young, you were gentle, you
 With sorrowful eyes, [waited
 As vanished in fleeting succession
 Rich prize after prize ;
 Till at last your small hands were left empty,
 And, tired of the strife,
 You turned to the Master : He led you
 Away into life.
 It is long since I saw you : I weary
 And thirst ev'ry day ;
 Ev'ry day, ev'ry hour I ponder,
 All wistful, the way
 That leads to the kingdom you dwell in.
 You trod it full fast ;
 But I caught — was it only a fancy ? —
 One sigh as you passed.

Alfred Norris

Shall I meet you some day with the angels—
Your beauty all new?
Will your soft eyes look on me so fondly?
As they used to do,
When you gathered my head to your bosom
With tender caress,
And my lips with a sweet touch of welcome
You bent down to press.

I hope for such meeting — I lost you,
So much left untold!
But perhaps even now you know all things—
The new and the old:
Perhaps even now you are nearer
Than ever before,
And you smile as you watch me come to
A lost love no more! [you —

O LOVE! thou makest all things even
In earth or heaven ;
Finding thy way through prison bars
Up to the stars ;
Or, true to the Almighty plan,
That out of dust created man,
Thou lookest in a grave—to see
Thine immortality!

Hartley Coleridge

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be ;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me :
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light !

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply ;
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye :
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

T CLASSED, appraising once,
Earth's lamentable sounds: the "well-a-day,"
The jarring "Yea" and "Nay,"
The fall of kisses on unanswering clay,
The sobbed "farewell," the "welcome"
But all did leaven the air [mournfuller—
With a less bitter leaven of sure despair,
Than these words—"I loved once."

And who saith, "I loved once?"
Not angels, whose clear eyes love, love foresee,
Love through Eternity!
Who, by "to love," do apprehend "to be."
Not God, called Love, His noble crown-name—
A light too broad for blasting! [casting
The Great God, changing not from everlasting,
Saith never, "I loved once!"

Oh, never is "Loved once"
Thy word, Thou Victim-Christ, misprized
Thy cross and curse may rend; [Friend!
But, having loved, Thou lovest to the end!
It is man's saying—man's! Too weak to move
One sphered star above,
Man desecrates the eternal God-word, Love,
With his "no more," and "once."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

* * *

Say never, ye loved once!
God is too near above, the grave beneath,
And all our moments breathe
Too quick in mysteries of life and death,
For such a word. The eternities avenge
Affections light of range—
There comes no change to justify that change,
Whatever comes—"loved once!"

MY true-love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given;
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss :
There never was a better bargain driven.
My true-love hath my heart and I have his.
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses
guides ;
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides.
My true-love hath my heart and I have his.

Mary Ashley Townsend

THOU askest, Love, how dear thou art to me!
A lifetime of sweet answers that includes.
Thou'rt that, which my much blest life holds
blessedest,
Of my soul's self the dearer counterpart ;
Dearest of all dear things dear to me art thou.
Of love's divinest height the supreme crest,
Yet I can never say how dear thou art.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee
Some of the great things Thou hast done
For me, even me,
Thy little one.

It was not that I cared for Thee—
But Thou didst set Thy heart upon
Me, even me,
Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee
To leave Thy majesty and throne,
And grow like me,
A little one.

* * * * *
Thou lovedst me upon the Tree—
Still me, hid by the ponderous stone—
Me always—me,
Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee
When death and hell lay overthrown :
Thou lovedst me,
Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee
To sit upon Thy Father's throne :
Thou lovest me,
Thy little one.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee
Love in pure love's communion,
For Thou lov'st me,
Thy little one.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

IN Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And, ever widening, slowly silence all :

The little rift within the lover's lute,
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That, rotting inward, slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping: let it go!
But shall it? Answer, darling ; answer, No;
And trust me not at all, or all in all.

Susan Marr Spaulding

TWO shall be born the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues, and have no
thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed;
Yet these o'er unknown seas to unknown
lands
Shall cross; escaping wreck, defying death,
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wondering step unto this end,
That one day out of darkness they shall meet,
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.
And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So closely side by side, that should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right,
They needs must stand acknowledged face
to face;
Yet these with groping hands that never
clasp,
With wistful eyes that never meet, and lips
Calling in vain on ears that never hear,
Shall wander all their weary days unknown,
And die unsatisfied. And this is Fate!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write,
And ever since it grew more clean and white,—
Slow to world-greetings,—quick with its
“Oh, list!”

When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here plainer to my sight
Than that first kiss. The second passed in
height

The first, and sought the forehead, and half
missed

Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, with love's own
crown,

With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state! since when, indeed
I have been proud and said, “My Love,
my own.”

Caroline Norton

LOVE not ! love not ! Ye hapless sons of clay :
Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly
flowers ;
Things that are made to fade and fall away,
Ere they have blossomed for a few short
hours.

Love not ! love not ! the thing you love may
change,
The rosy lips may cease to smile on you,
The kindly beaming eyes grow cold and
strange,
The heart still warmly beat, yet not be true.

Love not ! love not ! the thing you love may die,
May perish from the gay and gladsome
earth :

The silent stars, the blue and smiling sky,
Beam on its grave, as once upon its birth.

Love not ! love not ! O warning vainly said
In present hours, as in the years gone by :
Love flings a halo round the dear one's head —
Faultless ! Immortal ! till they change or die.

GOD keep you, dearest, all this long dark
night;
The winds are still,
The moon drops down behind the western
hill,
God keep you safely, dearest, till the light.

God keep you still when slumber fades
away ;
For care and strife
Take up new arms to fret our waking life:
God keep you thro' the battle of the day.

God keep you ! This, dear love, is all the
strain
Of every prayer.
I can but say again, and yet again,
God keep you every time and everywhere.

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